

[CHAP, **vin**

but too indulgent sire. But I will not quite despair. A sanguine temper supports me still. There is yet *time*) and that, according to the great Frederick, is everything. The fact is I am

'Spellbound within the clustering
Cyclades'

and go I must, though I fear I must hack for it. A literary prostitute I have never yet been, though born in an age of literary prostitution, and though I have more than once been, subject to temptations. . . . Tempting mother Colburn! However, as Frederick says, I have yet *time*, and I may be saved.

Keep this letter to yourself *without exception*, and indeed all I write to you. Though generally accused of uncommunicativeness, I like a gentle chat with a friend provided it be strictly confidential and he be a tried and trusty one like yourself. Women are delightful creatures, particularly if they be pretty, which they always are; but then they chatter — they can't help it — and I have no ambition in case my dearest project fails to be pointed out as the young gentleman. who was going to Constantinople. Let it be secret as the cave of the winds, and then perhaps a friendly breeze may yet bear me to Syria!

Farewell, *mon ami*,

B. D.

By the bye, I advise you to take care of my letters, for if I become half as famous as I intend to be you may sell them, for ten guineas apiece to the *Keepsake* for 1840, that being the price, as *on dit*, at which that delicate creature D[ouglas] K[innaird] furnishes a Byronic epistle to the Annuals.

To Mrs. Austen.

BRADENHAM HOUSE,

March

7, 1830.

MY DEAR MADAME,

Your repeated kind messages require my personal acknowledgment, and deserve something better. With regard to myself, in a word, I cannot be worse. With regard to London, it is of all places the one, in my present situation, least suited to me. Solitude and silence do not make my existence easy, but they make it endurable.

My plans about leaving England are more unsettled than ever. I anticipate no benefit from it, nor from anything else, but I am desirous of quitting England that I may lead even a more recluse life than I do at present, and emancipate myself from perpetual commiserations. When I was *in* town last, I consulted secretly many eminent men. I received